



## Stakeholders:

We have been publishing these weekly progress reports for six weeks. Next week we transition to a broader scope and bring you the challenges and successes from an Army Medical Command perspective. Walter Reed NOW will become MEDCOM NOW. Process improvements, benchmarks, standards, structure and systemic changes are being exported to all medical treatment facilities across the country as best practices in Warrior-/Family-centered care emerge from WRAMC and our sister AMEDD MTFs. These will go far in standardizing the promotion of health, the delivery of military healthcare and the optimal restoration of the injured and ill. It is our sincere expectation that we will no longer be considered 'healthcare with a headache,' but rather 'remedies with reliance.' Again, while we will no longer publish this separate newsletter, we will continue to provide our staff and beneficiaries updates about WRAMC published in Walter Reed's weekly newspaper, 'Stripe.'

## This past week ...



**Warrior Transition Brigade:** We officially recognized the arrival of the Warrior Transition Brigade this week in an activation ceremony on 25 April. In attendance were numerous distinguished visitors, including Honorable Jeff Miller, Florida Congressman; Honorable Nelson Ford, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management and Comptroller); Mr. John Argodale, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management and Comptroller); Gen. Richard Cody, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army; Maj. Gen. Gale Pollock, Acting Surgeon General; and SMA Kenneth Preston, Sergeant Major of the Army. The Brigade mission is to establish the conditions to facilitate the Warriors' healing process physically, mentally, and spiritually. The heart of the Brigade is the triad of Warrior support, including Squad Leaders, Case Managers, and Primary Care Physicians. We are all committed to providing the best possible leadership and clinical care to our Warriors-in-Transition equal to the quality of their service and the sacrifice they've made for our Nation.

On Friday, we also activated the Brigade's first company, Able Troop. The unit is comprised of professional cadre that currently includes six Platoon Sergeants, 13 Squad Leaders and 12 Case Managers. Prior to assuming its mission and to set the conditions for future success, every cadre member in Able Troop completed the Warrior Transition Certification Program and conducted Left Seat/Right Seat transitions with their counterparts in the Medical Center Brigade and the Medical Hold-Over Company. The Squad Leaders, Case Managers, and Primary Care Physicians will all work together as a team to ensure advocacy for the Warriors' needs, their continuity of care, and their seamless transition back into the force or on to a productive civilian life. As part of the ceremony, as Able Troop was activated, the Medical Center Brigade's Medical Hold-Over Company was deactivated.



**Walter Reed Fully Accredited by the Joint Commission:** Responding to the widely publicized stories of problems at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, The Joint Commission (the national organization for hospital accreditation, formerly JCAHO) conducted a "For-Cause Survey" from February 28th to March 2nd. Of the hundreds of applicable standards, the surveyors found "requirements for improvement" in 10, and the hospital had 45 days to report on "evidence of standards compliance". Not unexpectedly, many of the findings had to do with the transition from inpatient to outpatient care and the tracking of the large population of medical hold and holdover patients. There were also findings in both security of medication storage and hand hygiene, common to many hospitals in recent surveys. Due to significant progress in revising the discharge process and managing the outpatient population (as has been covered in Walter Reed Now over the past 5 weeks), the hospital was easily able to demonstrate improvement and compliance with all the standards cited. The hospital submitted its report to the Joint Commission one week early, and on April 25th the Joint Commission issued a new report acknowledging full compliance with all applicable standards. Walter Reed, therefore, remains fully Accredited, having earned the Gold Seal of approval from The Joint Commission.

**Walter Reed to open “Warrior Clinic”:** Walter Reed Army Medical Center is developing plans to open a primary care “Warrior Clinic” on campus with a projected opening date of July 9. The new facility will improve access to care for Warriors in Transition and their Families; provide continuity of care for all their health care needs during the rehabilitative care at Walter Reed; facilitate medication and medical care reconciliation; ensure seamless transfer across health care continuum; and enhance movement through the medical process with increased satisfaction for the wounded Soldiers and their Families. We are currently identifying personnel who will staff the “Warrior Clinic” and identifying the best location to ensure convenience and easy access.



**Purple Heart ceremony honors ‘Wounded Warriors’ service and sacrifices:** Six Warriors in Transition received Purple Hearts during a ceremony Friday at Walter Reed. Brig. Gen. Michael S. Tucker, NARMC Deputy Commanding General, presented the medals to the following Soldiers:

- Staff Sgt. John L. Francisco III, an infantry squad leader assigned to Troop C, 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron, 14<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, Fort Lewis, Wash.
- Sgt. Jeffrey A. Monk, an infantry team leader assigned to Co. A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn., 509<sup>th</sup> Inf. (Airborne), Fort Richardson, Alaska
- Spc. Curtis D. Turpin, an artilleryman assigned to Battery A, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn., 125<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery of the Minnesota National Guard
- Spc. Jesus E. Bustamante Jr., a gunner assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 5<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Rgt. (ICD), Fort Hood, Texas
- Pvt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jonathan N. Zaehring, an armor crewman assigned as a tank driver to Co. B, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, 4<sup>th</sup> Inf. Bde., Hohenfels, Germany
- Pvt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Albert Grose Jr., an infantry assigned as a gunner to 1<sup>st</sup> Bn., 26<sup>th</sup> Inf. Rgt., Schweinfurt, Germany.

This ceremony was documented by the New York Times, other print publications and 5 television stations.

**John Mellencamp performs for wounded Soldiers, staff at Walter Reed:** John Mellencamp performed for nearly 200 wounded Soldiers, staff members and their Families at Walter Reed in the Old Red Cross Building Friday night. He performed 14 songs, some of his classic hits and others from his new CD. The rock legend also toured Walter Reed and met with many patients and their Families during the day-long tour. He thanked them for their sacrifice and service to the country.



**Walter Reed’s Senior Enlisted Advisor team is now complete:** With the addition of the new Medical Center Brigade Command Sgt. Major Rodolfo Delvalle, Walter Reed’s Senior Enlisted Advisor team is now complete. CSM Delvalle joins CSM Jeffery Hartless, command sergeant major, Warrior Transition Brigade, CSM Donna Simmons, the hospital’s command sergeant major and Sgt. Maj. Rolando Moore, the new Garrison sergeant major. Walter Reed’s top noncommissioned officers with more than eight decades of leadership and experience will work together to ensure our wounded Soldiers continue to receive outstanding medical care and administrative support while our staff of dedicated medical and support professionals have the facilities and resources they need to perform their duties on a consistent level.



**Walter Reed Chaplain feature in Newsweek:** A Newsweek article by Ms. Eve Conant has been published today. It is the featured article in the issue, and a photo of Capt. Roger Benimoff, a resident in Walter Reed’s Clinical Pastoral Program, is on the issue’s cover. Ms. Conant’s story is about religious faith among the military. It discusses five different chaplains across DoD, the history/work/mission of military chaplains, and particularly the challenges chaplains face, along with their Soldiers, to maintain their faith in the midst of

war's pain, chaos, and destruction. Chaplain Benimoff's experiences are central to the article. Now he counsels with other veterans at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

**Expert Field Medical Badge prep at Fort Indiantown Gap** - Approximately 150 cadre are on site and have welcomed candidates this weekend for one of the Army's toughest challenges – earning the coveted EFMB – the calling card of a medical professional. The EFMB is the "gold standard" skill badge for Army Medical Department personnel; conducting the training this week is resource intensive; however, we're driving on despite the operational tempo. Testing will begin next week.



**Walter Reed's Licensed Practical Nurse Course accredited:** A successful inspection visit by Texas Board of Nursing recently certified Walter Reed's 68WM6 Training Program. We conduct two 12-month phase II training programs for military practical nurses. Phase one of the training is conducted at AMEDD Center and School in San Antonio, TX. The National Council Licensure Examination-Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN) is a computer-adaptive test of entry-level nursing competence. Passing the exam is required of candidates for licensure as a Registered Nurse (RN) by all US state and territorial Boards of Nursing. At the end of the training, students take the NCLEX exam to achieve the License Practical Nurse license - a requirement for all enlisted Army nurses (68WM6).

**NARMC DCG engaged in busting bureaucracy:** Brig. Gen. Michael Tucker, the North Atlantic Regional Medical Command's Deputy Commanding General, helped organize and steer a comprehensive Campaign Planning Group at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, Virginia with nearly 200 participants from throughout the Army, Department of Veterans Affairs and other groups. The purpose was to gather key organizations and decision makers into one location and discuss impediments to service members' medical treatment and benefits following their discharge from the hospital. This session brought to bear the plight of America's wounded sons and daughters and their related frustrations with systemic inadequacies. Brig. Gen. Tucker is leading change, making improvements and exporting best business practices across the Army Medical Command.

### In retrospect

Nearly two months ago, a quick eight weeks, I returned to Walter Reed. It was not the same Walter Reed I remembered when I was here as a young doctor nearly 30 years ago. It is not the same Walter Reed I know today as its commanding general. While it's easy to identify advancements in technology and medicine during this span of time, the heart of Walter Reed has been and will always be - people. During this same period, caring, compassionate people have been slowly subjected to a growing bureaucracy, constrained by proprietary automated systems that don't communicate with others and currently inundated with patient management from two war zones for a period as long as our involvement in World War II and the Korean War combined. Yet it is people making steady improvements – a few yesterday, some today and more tomorrow that is having a profound effect on patients and their Families here – the home of Warrior Care.

In our first issue of Walter Reed NOW, I noted, I was confident; Walter Reed Army Medical Center would quickly regain the public trust. There are many signs indicating we're earning that confidence again. From this experience, we've learned we must earn our reputation with every patient and Family encounter throughout the medical process. I ask that you continue to work side-by-side with us. Independently you are each remarkable; however, collectively we are incredible.

Warrior Care!

**ERIC SCHOOMAKER**

Major General, MC  
Commanding